GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3858
ANSWERED ON:22.08.2005
TASK FORCE ON LIFE SAVING DRUGS
Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `Medi-sin : New Drugs, Old Name` appearing in the Times of India, New Delhi edition dated July 18, 2005;

(b) whether lack of a Central law has led to several drugs being sold under similar or identical brand names putting the patients in serious risk;

(c) if so, the steps being taken to remedy the situation;

(d) whether the Task Force constituted on life saving drugs has recommended fixation of maximum price of scheduled and unscheduled medicines at a price obtained by government agencies against annual procurement tenders plus 50 percent mark up;

(e) if so, whether the Task Force has also recommended for debranding the prescriptions by medical profession in order to pass on the benefit of cheaper and competitive prices of medicines to the masses; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the Government to implement the same without any further delay in public interest?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS AND STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)

(a) to (c): Under the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the Rules made thereunder, every pharmaceutical company has to obtain a licence from the concerned State Licensing Authority to manufacture and market clrugs. The Rules have prescribed detailed requirements in respect of the facilities to be provided by a drug manufacturer to obtain licence for manufacturing of drugs. The State Licensing Authorities while granting licence also approve the drug formulations along with the proposed brand names. There is no requirement of separately registering these brand names of drugs under the Rules.

(d) to (f): A Task Force has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Principal Advisor (PP), Planning Commission to explore various options other than price control for achieving the objective of making available life-saving drugs at reasonable prices. No recommendations of the Task Force have been received by the Government so far.